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Reporting yellow fever on American schooner Dantzler—Yellow fever and smallpox prevalent in Habana.

HABANA, CUBA, September 20, 1896.

SIR: In confirmation of my telegram of the 17th instant, saying that the American schooner *Nan M. Dantzler*, which had sailed on that date for Pascagoula via Tortugas, had had yellow fever aboard while here, I have the honor now to report that said vessel entered this port on the 26th day of August, and soon went to the notoriously infected wharf called Tallapiedra, to discharge her load of lumber, which she had brought from Pascagoula. Several days after she went there one man was sick, for a few days, of what I strongly suspect was yellow fever, but as the captain called no physician, it will never be really known from what disease he suffered. Some days after this man's sickness, or five or six days before the vessel left here, another man fell sick of what I know to be yellow fever, for after the man had been sick four or five days and the vessel was about ready for sea, the captain asked me to go aboard and see one of his men, who he said was a little sick, but he did not think much was the matter with him. I found the man in the last stage of yellow fever, with intensely albuminous urine, and so weak that he fainted on raising up a little to void it. The captain was requested to send the man or have him carried to the nearest hospital as soon as possible. It was done, and the man is still here, fortunately slowly recovering from that serious disease.

It will be remembered that Tallapiedra wharf is in close proximity to the old and badly infected military hospital, and is probably, and has been for many years, the most dangerous place for vessels to discharge at in the whole harbor in respect to their invasion by yellow fever. It is a pity that some way could not be devised to prevent vessels from going there, particularly American, and those subsequently bound to ports in the United States.

It will be seen by statistical reports sent on that yellow fever continues to be an active epidemic here, and I am informed that it is so in most of the places where Spanish soldiers are found. The steamers plying between this place and the western end of the island bring on their return trip from ports along the coast numerous cases of that disease. It is reported that the hospitals at Guanajay, Santiago de las Vegas, San Antonio de los Baños, Artemisa, and other places have many sick of that complaint. The large "Casa de Beneficencia y Maternidad" or "Foundling and Lying-in Hospital" has by orders of the Government been emptied of its women and children and is now being occupied as a hospital for Spanish soldiers.

Smallpox, instead of diminishing, increases daily, not only in Habana proper but in its suburbs. In Regla, on the opposite side of the bay from Habana, there are many cases, an epidemic there.

It is difficult to see when this epidemic will come to an end, with the influx of unvaccinated people from the country driven in by the conditions of war, and the frequent arrival of Spanish steamers from the mother country with cases of that disease aboard. As there are practically no precautions taken to prevent smallpox spreading from those vessels I am afraid it will be many months before this scourge is over.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

D. M. BURGESS,
Sanitary Inspector, U. S. M. H. S.